

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

To the Warden and Members of the Walsoken Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I again have the honour of submitting to you my report for the past year, ending December 31st, 1925, together with remarks in relation to the prevailing sanitary conditions existing and to the general health of the district.

The number of cases of infectious sickness have been in larger numbers than in the previous year, but at no time were they so large as to give cause for any serious alarm. There were notified:—Four cases of Scarlet Fever, seven of Diphtheria, one of Erysipelas, ten of Pneumonia, and sixteen of Chicken Pox, dealing with these:—

SCARLET FEVER, of a mild type, was notified in one case in May, one in September, one in October, and one in December, and of these two were removed to and treated in the Isolation Hospital.

DIPHTHERIA was notified in seven cases, compared with three cases last year, fortunately not of a severe type, and five of these were removed to the Isolation Hospital, and of these seven cases one death resulted.

During the year there were several cases of WHOOPING COUGH amongst young children. This disease always requires great care, but too frequently cases are allowed at large. I regret that one male and one female died from this sickness.

INFLUENZA was also prevalent and caused the deaths of one male and three females.

One of the most serious diseases that has to be dealt with are TUBERCULOSIS AFFECTIONS, and these cases are always found existing in the district, and although these cases are now carefully looked after and much done to afford relief to the sufferers, early notification is highly desirable.

In this district during the year 19 cases were reported, of these ten males and five females were afflicted with PULMONARY PHTHISIS, and one female with Tubercular Glands, two males with Tuberculosis of the Spine, and one male with Tubercular Disease of the Vocal Cords. All these cases have received considerable care and attention, but I regret having to record that four males and three females died from Pulmonary Phthisis and one female from other Tuberculous Disease.

I again have to record with pleasure the careful attention given by the Sanitary Inspector in all cases, and that disinfectants have been liberally supplied wherever needed.

GENERAL STATISTICS:—

The area of the District is 4,652 acres, with a population now estimated to be 3,954, there are now about 1,060 inhabited dwellings, with a ratable value of £18,525, and the sum realised by a penny rate about £40.

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GENERAL INFORMATION :—

It is requisite for me to again note that we have in common with Wisbech, which adjoins this District, an Isolation Hospital and a Small Pox Hospital, available for all Infectious Sickness, provided for and supported by the Joint Councils, as well as a District Nurse, and one for Maternity Work, supplied through the Nursing Association, and whose services are always available, and with these an Infants' Welfare Centre, where excellent work is carried on, and which is richly deserving of the hearty support it needs.

BIRTHS :—

There were 85 births, being 9 fewer in number than during last year, of which number 45 were legitimate males, 32 legitimate females, 3 illegitimate males and 5 illegitimate females, giving a birth-rate of 20·4 per 1,000 of the population.

DEATHS :—

The number of deaths from all causes was 60, being 10 more than during the previous year, of these 30 were males and 30 females, this gives a death-rate of 15·1 per 1,000 of the estimated population, included in this number there were 4 deaths in legitimate males, 5 in legitimate females and 1 death in illegitimate females, this giving an infantile death-rate of 117 per 1,000 births, whilst fortunately no death was attributable to child birth. Amongst the deaths 4 were due to Influenza, 7 to Cancerous Affections, 7 to Heart Disease, 4 to Bronchitis and 5 to Pneumonia.

There has existed no specific cause of sickness, and no deleterious trade is carried on in the district.

Tabulated the number of deaths were :—

Under 1 year of age	...	10
„ 2 „	...	0
„ 3 „	...	1
„ 4 „	...	0
„ 5 „	...	0
„ 10 „	...	0
„ 15 „	...	0
„ 20 „	...	0
„ 25 „	...	2
„ 35 „	...	0
„ 45 „	...	5
„ 60 „	...	8
Over 60 „	...	34

There are no certified midwives, whilst ample provision is still provided by the Council for Pathological and Bacteriological Examinations, and a supply of Diphtheria Anti-toxin can be obtained in all needy cases.

Ambulance facilities, free of all expense, are available, whilst Venereal Diseases, which fortunately are rare, are provided with adequate arrangements for special treatment when needed.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION :—

With a view to keep the District in a satisfactory condition periodical visits have been made, and the few nuisances complained of have received speedy attention.

The District has been well looked after, and kept in a clean and satisfactory way, disinfectants used and freely distributed.

The various Bake-houses, Slaughter-houses, Schools, Factories and other buildings, are still keep in a good sanitary condition, the Sanitary Inspector being always in, and residing in the district greatly facilitates this.

The various Milk Shops and Dairies are well cared for and an abundance of excellent good milk is available. The condition of the Main and Smaller Sewers continue to work satisfactory, and these are assisted by the abundance of the Marham Water, now practically the water supply of the district, which is supplied day and night under constant pressure.

FOOD SUPPLY :—

There has been a plentiful supply of excellent food stuffs and little has been condemned.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF :—

This, as before, consists of the Council with their Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector, who are both part-time officers.

The following were the notifiable diseases during the year.

					Treated in Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Diphtheria	7	...	5	...	1
Scarlet Fever	...	4	...	2	...	0
Enteric Fever	...	0	..	0	..	0
Puerperal Fever	...	0	...	0	...	0
Erysipelas	...	1	...	0	...	0

and the Notifications of Tuberculosis :—

Age Period.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1 to 5 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 to 10 „	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
10 to 15 „	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 to 20 „	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
20 to 25 „	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
25 to 35 „	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0
35 to 45 „	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
45 to 60 „	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	10	5	3	1	4	3	0	0
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

HOUSING :—

The number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total with the assistance of converted Army Huts—15.

(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts, 1919, 1923 or 1924.

1—By the Local Authority—9.

2—By other bodies or persons and Army Huts or Railway Carriages converted into Bungalows—6.

1—UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES:—

Inspection.

- 1—Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)—65.
- 2—Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910-1928—23.
- 3—Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—0.
- 4—Number of dwelling houses (Exclusive of those referred to under the preceeding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—14

2—REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF STATUTORY NOTICE:—

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers—7.

3—ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS:—

(a) Proceedings under section 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1919.

- 1—Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs—5.
- 2—Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit for service after formal notices.
 - (a) By owners—4.
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners—0.

3—Number of dwelling houses in respect of which closing orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close—0.

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- 1—Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—3.
- 2—Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices—
 - (a) By owners—3.
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners—0.

(c) Proceedings under 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1900—

No steps were taken owing to the house shortage in the district.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

HARRY GROOM, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.

